

dustry's other leading forecasters agree with the AGC that dollar volume will be up this year, whether measured by contractors' new business or by estimated spending for construction now under way or to be started. All see residential as the biggest gainer, and nonresidential building as sluggish.

ENGINEERING NEWS-RECORD and AGC are at the low end of the 7 to 10% range of forecasts. ENR takes its position mainly because its forecast includes all construction except homebuilding. Actually, ENR is higher than others on prospects for heavy construction, which is based on its exclusive figures on new plans trends.

According to those figures, heavy and highway construction, the backbone of the 1970 construction market, will provide strong support again in 1971.

New plans for heavy and highway projects jumped 76% last year, ENR figures show (see table, right). With financing more readily available at lower interest rates and assuming no cutbacks in federal aid, more of these projects will go to bid this year than last. But a 1971 won't match 1970's jump of 14%.

Far less sturdy is the building market. New plans for nonresidential buildings flowed to the drawing boards of architects and engineers in 7% less dollar volume last year. The decline was mainly in manufacturing plants and in commercial buildings, for which bidding volume in 1971's first half will mirror the recent slump in new plans.

Building plans feature a few areas of strength, however. Hospital plans soared while the volume going to bid slumped. Apartment plans climbed 10%, offsetting much of the weakness in multiunit residential building caused by drops of 24% in hotels, 36% in dormitories.

Thanks to heavy and highway projects, AGC's total new plans in 1970 topped the previous record of 1967. And because they far outran the record volume of work going to bid, the inventory on the drawing boards is very high.

Bidding volume (low bids for public works plus contracts for private construction other than homebuilding) rose 5% last year chiefly because federal work more than doubled. State and local projects about matched 1969's record, while private work squeaked to a narrow 3% gain.

The sharp rebound in federal work contributed heavily to the 54% climb in long-term use and control projects, as did average construction programs of local sanitation districts.

What the Industry's other forecasters say

ENGINEERING NEWS-RECORD: A 7% rise in contract dollars to \$56.7 billion, excluding homebuilding. A 12.6% rise in costs will cut physical volume 5%. Heavy and highway will rise 7%, nonresidential building 2%, and multiunit housing 20%.

F. W. Dodge: A 9% climb in contracts including homebuilding to a record \$74.4 billion. Heavy and highway awards to be up only 2%, and nonresidential building up 2%. Residential will rise 21%, sparked by a 28% jump in apartments.

Bureau of Domestic Commerce (Department of Commerce): A 10% climb to \$99 billion in its estimate of new construction put in place. Public construction will rise 6%, private residential 12%, and private nonresidential building 7%.

New plans and jobs bid set records

(in \$ millions)

	New Plans		Bidding Volume	
	1970	'69-'70 % chg.t	1970	'69-'70 % chg.t
Total Construction	\$68,016	+16	\$31,128	+5.3
State & municipal	34,773	+51	18,704	+0.8
Federal	4,942	+32	2,037	+119
Private	28,301	+11	10,387	+3
Heavy Construction, Total	29,469	+76	14,800	+14
Water Use & Control	10,226	+22	4,151	+54
Waterworks:	1,385	-6	902	+24
combination or system	654	-1	287	+687
dam, reservoir	160	+39	88	+38
pipeline, distribution	314	+38	167	+22
plant, treatment or pumping	228	-10	112	-16
tunnel	0	-100	225	+9
Sewerage:	5,516	+54	1,653	+26
combination or system	1,447	+26	435	-21
sanitary sewer	1,040	+6	471	+96
storm sewer	539	+277	131	+29
plant, solid waste disposal	426	+137	62	+7
plant, treatment or pumping	2,063	+83	510	+41
tunnel	0	-100	44	+76
Rivers, harbors, flood control:	3,325	-1	900	+169
dam, flood control	483	-45	364	+153
levee, floodwall	326	+41	83	+...
dredging	1,540	-84	446	+211
Dam: hydroelectric, multipurpose	519	-58	605	+117
Irrigation: canal, lateral	445	+233	91	+92
Transportation	15,179	+310	8,937	+4.2
Bridges	1,206	+145	1,027	-25
Highways	11,840	+923	6,689	+10
Tunnel, subway, railroad	503	+266	271	-12
Space & missile bases	572	+...	357	+308
Airport paving & utility	654	-19	339	-27
Airport terminal & hangar	405	-45	267	-20
Electricity, Gas, Communications	3,200	+5.8	1,409	+24
Power plant	2,673	+86	1,324	+25
Nonresidential Building	28,032	-7	13,951	-3.1
Manufacturing, private	2,455	-32	1,324	-32
Manufacturing, public	2,135	-4	371	-15
Other industrial, private	1,558	+4	348	+40
Warehouse, storage	458	-33	259	-16
Commercial	7,717	-11	3,397	+21
Office	3,506	-11	2,067	+26
Store & shopping center	2,678	-20	844	+0.2
Recreation & restaurant	172	-50	44	+...
Government	2,859	+6	1,004	-24
Administration & service	2,213	+8	744	-18
Other	646	-1	259	+3.2
Education	8,241	-4	5,281	+3
Higher education	3,649	-3	2,421	+5
School	4,592	-4	2,860	+2
Medical	4,651	+4	1,970	-11
Hospital	3,361	+19	1,461	-16
Nursing home	454	-24	220	+9
Multi-unit Residential Building	10,515	-9	2,377	+7